THE WORLD, FOR THE YEAR

ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED and FIFTY FOUR.

By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

The WORLD *was all before him, where to chuſe.*

MILTON.

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THE WORLD.

NUMBER LIII.

By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *January* the 3d, 1754.

THERE are very few employments which require a greater degree of care and circumſpection than that of conducting a public paper. Double meanings are ſo much the delight of all converſations, that people ſeldom chuſe to take things in their moſt obvious ſenſe; but are putting words and ſentences to the torture, to force confeſſions from them which their authors never meant, or if they had, would have deſerved whipping for.

FOR this reaſon I take all the pains I can to be underſtood but one way. And indeed, were I to publiſh nothing in theſe papers but what I write myſelf, I ſhould be very little apprehenſive of double conſtructions. But,

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it ſeems, I have not been ſufficiently guarded againſt the ſubtilties of my correſpondents. AMANDA's letter in my laſt paper has been diſcovered to be a manifeſt deſign to remove the lace-trade from Ludgate-hill to Duke's-court. Some people make no conſcience of declaring that I am the author of it myſelf, and that I received a conſiderable bribe for writing it. Others are of opinion that it is the production of a very pretty journey-woman in Duke's-court, who is entring into partnerſhip with her miſtreſs in the lace-trade, and has taken this method to bring cuſtom to the ſhop. But whoever is the writer of this letter, or whatever was the deſign of it, all people are agreed that the effect is certain; it being very obſervable that the virtuous women have been ſeen, for this week paſt, to croud to the lace-ſhops in Duke's-court, and that ſcarcely half a dozen of them have appeared upon Ludgate-hill ſince they were appriſed by this paper that ſuch a perſon as AMANDA was known to be houſed there.

FROM at leaſt half a dozen letters, which I have received upon this occaſion, I ſhall only publiſh the two following.

To Mr. FITZ-ADAM.

" SIR,

" I BEG to be informed if the letter ſigned Amanda " in your laſt paper be reality or invention. If reality, " pleaſe to tell me at which of the lace-ſhops upon " Ludgate-hill the creature lives, that I may avoid the " odious ſight of her, and not be obliged to buy my " laces of a milliner, or to murder my horſes by dri- " ving them upon every trifling occaſion to the other end " of the town, I am, ſir,

" *Your humble ſervant,*

" CHEAPSIDE, *Dec.* 29th, 1753. " REBECCA BLAMELESS."

" MR.

" MR. FITZ-ADAM,

" I BEG that you will do me the juſtice to inform the " public that I have not had a lying-in in my houſe, " ſince I was brought to bed of my fourteenth child, " which is five years ago next lady-day; and that the " young woman who has aſſiſted me in the lace-trade " for theſe laſt three months, is not called Amanda, " but Lucretia. I am,

" *Your very humble ſervant,*

" LUDGATE HILL, *Dec.* 30th, 1753. " WINNEFRED BOBBIN."

I WISH with all my heart, that it was as eaſy for me to make amends for what has happened, as it is to vindicate myſelf from any intereſted deſign in the publication of AMANDA's letter. It was ſent to Mr. Dodſley's by the penny poſt, written in a very pretty Italian hand, and will be ſhewn to as many of the curious as are deſirous of ſeeing it.

I WILL not deny that I ought to have cancelled this letter; as I might reaſonably have ſuppoſed that no lady, who entertained a proper regard for her virtue, would be ſeen at a lace-ſhop upon Ludgate-hill, while there was a bare poſſibility of her being ſerved by AMANDA. Indeed, to confeſs the truth, I have always been of opinion, that every young creature, who has been once convicted of making a ſlip, ſhould be compelled to take upon her the occupation of ſtreet-walking all her life after.

IT is a maxim among the people called Quakers (and a very laudable one it is) not to ſuffer a convicted and open knave to be one of their body. They have a particular ceremony, by which they expell him their community: and though he may continue to profeſs the opinions of Quakeriſm, they look upon him to be no member of their church, and no otherwiſe a brother, than as every man is deſcended from one common father.

I MAKE no doubt but that the Quakers have copied this piece of policy from the ladies: but as moſt copies are obſerved to fall ſhort of the ſpirit of their originals, this induſtrious, prudent and opulent ſet of people will, I hope, excuſe me, if I prefer a firſt and finiſhed deſign to an imperfect imitation of it.

THE Quakers have never, that I know of, excommunicated a member for one ſingle failure; nor upon frequent repetitions of it have they ſo driven him from the commerce of mankind, as to make him deſperate in vice, or to kill him with deſpair. How nobly ſevere are the ladies to the apoſtates from purity! To be once frail, is forever to be infamous. A fall from virtue, however circumſtanced, or however repented of, can admit of no extenuation. They look upon the offender and the offence with equal deteſtation; and poſtpone buſineſs, nay, even pleaſure itſelf, for the great duty of detraction, and for conſigning to perpetual infamy a ſiſter who has diſhonoured them.

THIS ſettled and unalterable hatred of impurity cannot be ſufficiently admired, if it be conſidered how delicately the boſoms which harbour it are formed, and how eaſy it is to move them to pity and compaſſion in all other inſtances: eſpecially if we add to this conſideration, its having force enough to tear up by the roots thoſe ſincere and tender friendſhips, which all handſome women, in a ſtate of virtue, are ſo well known to feel for one another.

NOTHING can ſo ſtrongly convince me of the truth of theſe female friendſhips as the arguments which ſhallow and ſuperficial men have thought proper to bring againſt them. They tell us that no handſome woman ever ſaid a civil thing of one as handſome as herſelf: but, on the contrary, that it is always the delight of both to leſſen the beauty and to detract from the reputations of each other.

ADMITTING the accuſation to be true, how eaſy is it to ſee through the good-natured diſguiſe of this behaviour? Theſe generous young creatures are ſo apprehenſive for their companions, that they deny them beauty in order to ſecure them from the attempts of libertines. They know too that the principal ornament of beauty is virtue; and that without both a lady is ſeldom in danger of an obſtinate purſuit: for which reaſon they very prudently deny her the poſſeſſion of either. The lady thus obliged, is doing in return the ſame agreeable ſervice to her beautiful acquaintance; and is wondering what the men can ſee in ſuch trifling creatures to be even tolerably civil to them. Thus under the appearance of envy and ill-nature, they maintain inviolable friendſhips, and live in a mutual intercourſe of the kindeſt offices. Nay, to ſuch a pitch of enthuſiaſm have theſe friendſhips been ſometimes carried, that I have known a lady to be under no apprehenſions for herſelf, though purſued by half the rakes in town, who has abſolutely fainted away at ſeeing one of theſe rakes only playing with the fan of her handſome friend.

THE ſame diſcreet behaviour is obſerved by almoſt every lady in her affairs with a man. If ſhe would expreſs her approbation of him, the phraſe is, "What a "ridiculous animal!" When approbation is grown into love, it is, "Lord! how I deteſt him!" But when ſhe riſes to a ſolemn declaration of, "I'll die a thouſand "deaths rather than give him my conſent," we are then ſure that the ſettlements are drawing, or that ſhe has packed up her clothes, and intends leaping into his arms without any ceremony whatſoever.

THERE may poſſibly be cavillers at this behaviour of the ladies, as well as unbelievers in female friendſhips; but I dare venture to affirm that every man will honour them for their extraordinary civilities and good-humour

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